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PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

PCT/JP2002/009512



PCT

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

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|--|---|---|
| Applicant's or agent's file reference 137323-875 | FOR FURTHER ACTION See Notification of Transmittal of International Preliminary Examination Report (Form PCT/IPEA/416) | |
| International application No. PCT/JP2002/009512 | International filing date (day/month/year) 17 September 2002 (17.09.2002) | Priority date (day/month/year) 27 December 2001 (27.12.2001) |
| International Patent Classification (IPC) or national classification and IPC H01L 21/205, 21/22, C23C 16/458, 16/46, H01L 21/68 | | |
| Applicant TOKYO ELECTRON LIMITED | | |

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1. This international preliminary examination report has been prepared by this International Preliminary Examining Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.

2. This REPORT consists of a total of 3 sheets, including this cover sheet.

☒ This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, i.e., sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis for this report and/or sheets containing rectifications made before this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions under the PCT).

These annexes consist of a total of 2 sheets.

3. This report contains indications relating to the following items:

- I ☒ Basis of the report
- II ☐ Priority
- III ☐ Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
- IV ☐ Lack of unity of invention
- V ☒ Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
- VI ☐ Certain documents cited
- VII ☐ Certain defects in the international application
- VIII ☐ Certain observations on the international application

| | |
|--|---|
| Date of submission of the demand 14 April 2003 (14.04.2003) | Date of completion of this report 08 January 2004 (08.01.2004) |
| Name and mailing address of the IPEA/JP | Authorized officer |
| Facsimile No. | Telephone No. |

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

International application No.

PCT/JP2002/009512

I. Basis of the report

1. With regard to the elements of the international application:*

☐ the international application as originally filed

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☒ the description:

pages 1-9, as originally filed
pages _____, filed with the demand
pages _____, filed with the letter of _____

☒ the claims:

pages 3, 6-13, as originally filed
pages _____, as amended (together with any statement under Article 19
pages _____, filed with the demand
pages 1-2, 4-5, filed with the letter of 29 August 2003 (29.08.2003)

☒ the drawings:

pages 1-7, as originally filed
pages _____, filed with the demand
pages _____, filed with the letter of _____

☐ the sequence listing part of the description:

pages _____, as originally filed
pages _____, filed with the demand
pages _____, filed with the letter of _____

2. With regard to the language, all the elements marked above were available or furnished to this Authority in the language in which the international application was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item. These elements were available or furnished to this Authority in the following language _____ which is:

- ☐ the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international search (under Rule 23.1(b)).
☐ the language of publication of the international application (under Rule 48.3(b)).
☐ the language of the translation furnished for the purposes of international preliminary examination (under Rule 55.2 and/or 55.3).

3. With regard to any nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence disclosed in the international application, the international preliminary examination was carried out on the basis of the sequence listing:

- ☐ contained in the international application in written form.
☐ filed together with the international application in computer readable form.
☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in written form.
☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in computer readable form.
☐ The statement that the subsequently furnished written sequence listing does not go beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed has been furnished.
☐ The statement that the information recorded in computer readable form is identical to the written sequence listing has been furnished.

4. ☐ The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:

- ☐ the description, pages _____
☐ the claims, Nos. _____
☐ the drawings, sheets/fig _____

5. ☐ This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed, as indicated in the Supplemental Box (Rule 70.2(c)).**

* Replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report since they do not contain amendments (Rule 70.16 and 70.17).

** Any replacement sheet containing such amendments must be referred to under item 1 and annexed to this report.

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

International application No.

PCT/JP02/09512

V. Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|--------|------|-----|
| Novelty (N) | Claims | 1-13 | YES |
| | Claims | | NO |
| Inventive step (IS) | Claims | | YES |
| | Claims | 1-13 | NO |
| Industrial applicability (IA) | Claims | 1-13 | YES |
| | Claims | | NO |

2. Citations and explanations

Document 1: JP, 11-260746, A (Sumitomo Metal Industries, Ltd.), 24 September, 1999 (24.09.99)
 Document 2: WO, 00-19502, A1 (Hitachi, Ltd.), 6 April, 2000 (06.04.00)
 Document 3: JP, 11-97362, A (Fujitsu Ltd.), 9 April, 1999 (09.04.99)
 Document 4: JP, 2000-269150, A (Toshiba Ceramics Co., Ltd.), 29 September, 2000 (29.09.00)
 Document 5: JP, 10-50626, A (Mitsui Engineering & Shipbuilding Co., Ltd.), 20 February, 1998 (20.02.98),
 Fig. 1
 Document 6: WO, 01-18856, A1 (Mitsubishi Material Silicon K.K., presently named Sumitomo Mitsubishi Silicon Corp.), 15 March, 2001 (15.03.01)
 Document 7: JP, 11-31639, A (Kokusai Electric Co., Ltd.), 2 February, 1999 (02.02.99)
 Document 8: JP, 9-237781, A (Tokyo Electron Ltd.), 9 September, 1997 (09.09.97)

The subject matters of claims 1-13 do not appear to involve an inventive step in view of documents 1 (claims 2 and 3, Figs. 1 and 2), document 2 (claim 5, page 7, lines 6 and 7, Fig. 4), document 3 (claim 1, Fig. 1) and document 5 (Fig. 1) respectively cited in the ISR. In documents 1 and 2, support plates are attached to columns through "wafer inserting grooves" and "grooves." However, a person skilled in the art could have as required attached through "support claws" as described in document 3 instead. On the other hand, the locking structures in contact with the sidewall portions of the "support claws" for preventing slipping down are well known as described in document 5 (Fig. 1). Therefore, a person skilled in the art could have easily formed locking portions for preventing slipping down, in the support plates taught by documents 1 and 2.

Forming fine projections and depressions for preventing a material undergoing treatment from adhering to the surface for mounting the material undergoing treatment on it is a well-known constitution (claim 4, [0021] and [0033] of document 4).

Forming locking portions or engaging holes in a member is commonly used (Fig. 1 of document 5, Fig. 1 of document 6, and claim 3 of newly cited document 8), and this constitution does not appear to involve an inventive step.

Furthermore, installing plural dummy plates at the top end portion and the bottom end portion of a heat treatment boat is a mere well-known constitution (claim 1 and Fig. 1 of document 7).

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